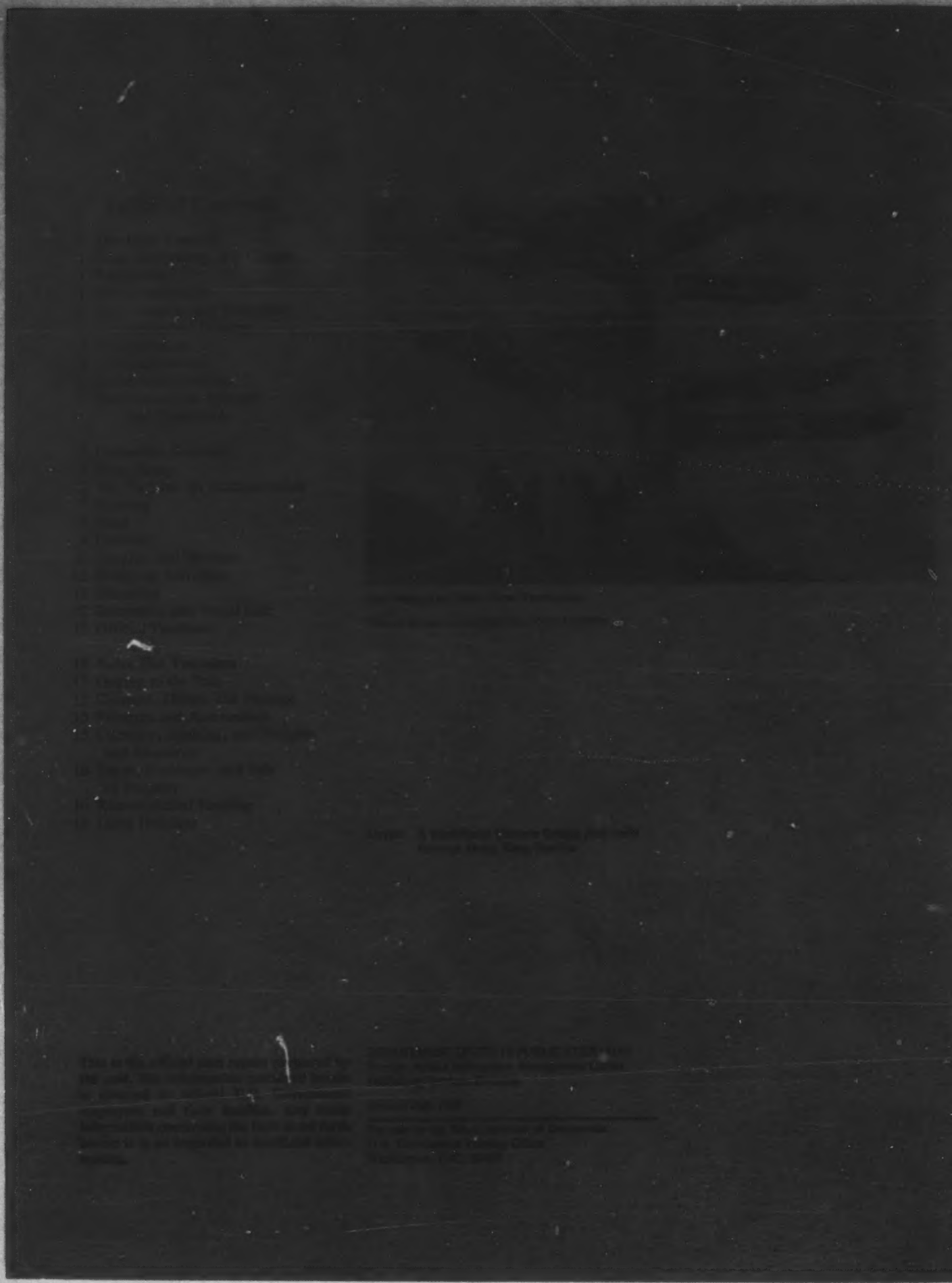
July 1988

Hong Kong
Post Report



The Host Country

Area, Geography, and Climate

The British Territory of Hong Kong, with an area of about 404 square miles, consists of Hong Kong Island, Stonecutter's Island, the Kowloon Peninsula, the New Territories (an area between Kowloon and the Shenzhen River to the north), and various surrounding islands. The territory, which dates from 1841, was established officially when China ceded Hong Kong Island to Great Britain in the 1842 Treaty of Nanking. The Kowloon Peninsula and Stonecutter's Island were added in 1860 with the signing of the Treaty of Peking. Britain obtained a 99-year lease on the remainder, called the New Territories, in 1898. In late 1984, the British and Chinese agreed that the entire territory will revert to Chinese sovereignty in 1997. This is the date on which the New Territories Lease was to have expired.

From the fishing villages of 140 years ago, Hong Kong has grown into one of the most important trading, industrial, and financial centers in Asia. Official representatives of most major non-Communist countries are assigned to the territory along with a host of international industrialists and business persons who participate in Hong Kong's booming trade and industry.

Hong Kong Island, the site of most of the territory's governmental, commercial, and financial activities, is about 32 square miles. The island's population center is the city of Victoria, commonly called Hong Kong, which faces the harbor and mainland. The Consulate General and most American official housing are on this island. The seaward side of the island is made up of rugged shoreline with steep cliffs and sheltered bays. The interior is rough with many steep hills and small valleys. The highest area, known as the Peak, has breathtaking views of the busy harbor and Kowloon on one side, and the offshore islands and the South China Sea on the other.

Kowloon is on a 2-mile-long peninsula directly across the harbor from Victoria. It is separated from the New Territories by groups of hills, the highest of which rises to more than 3,000 feet. It is Hong Kong's major industrial area as well as a residential and shopping center. Many hotels are in Kowloon as are numerous shops that cater to tourists.

The New Territories comprises an area of some 355 square miles between Kowloon and China and includes some 235 small offshore islands. This area accounts for most of the territory's agricultural activity and a growing portion of its industrial sector. The topography is primarily steep hills and marshes, but many places are under cultivation. The only major cultivation on the offshore islands is on Lantau Island, the largest. The remaining islands are small and, if inhabited, are primarily fishing bases. The rustic character of the New Territories between Kowloon and the China border has undergone dramatic changes in the past several years as the government implements plans to construct major satellite towns.

Hong Kong's climate is governed by the monsoons. Although the territory lies within the Tropics, it enjoys a variety of weather because of these seasonal winds. The winter monsoon blows from the north or northeast from September to mid-March, and the summer wind blows from the south or southwest from mid-March to September.

During the summer monsoon, the weather is hot and humid; during the winter monsoon it is cool. Late fall is usually the most pleasant time of year with generally dry and sunny weather and temperatures of 70°F to 75°F. Year-round average temperatures range from 58°F in February (with lows in the 30s) to 82°F in July (with highs in the 90s). The average annual rainfall is 95 inches. The mean relative humidity ranges from a low of 67% in November to 84% in May; many days the humidity reaches 99% accompanied by heavy clouds.

Population

Hong Kong's population is approximately 5½ million. An estimated 90% are Chinese. A majority of the territory's Chinese residents were born in Hong Kong, but many were born in China or are the children of immigrants/refugees. The rest of the community includes mainly expatriate government officials and business persons of all nationalities. Cantonese is the language of the urban area and the mother tongue of most of the territory's residents. English is widely spoken.

Most people follow traditional Chinese religious beliefs. The two main religions are Buddhism and Taoism. About 10% are Christian; slightly more than half of these are Roman Catholic. About 8,000 Hong Kong Chinese are followers of Islam. The Hindi community, which has been part of the territory since its earliest days, numbers more than 6,000.

Public Institutions

Hong Kong is a British territory administered by the Hong Kong Government. The government is headed by a Governor who is responsible to the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs in London and governs with the advice of the local Executive Council. Membership of the Executive Council consists of ex officio government department heads and appointed notables. The Legislative Council, which approves legislation for the territory, has government and appointed members as well as members indirectly elected from the District Boards, the Urban and Regional Councils and functional constituencies (representing various business, industrial, and professional interest groups). Some 30 executive departments are organized along functional lines.

The Urban Council has jurisdiction over Hong Kong Island and Kowloon, the Regional Council has jurisdiction over the New Territories, and the 19 District Boards cover the entire territory. All have directly-elected members as well as government and appointed members. The Urban and Regional Councils are responsible for a variety of services in their jurisdictions, while the District Boards serve as bodies for monitoring public opinion regarding government policies.

Arts, Science, and Education

Presented throughout the year are symphony concerts, recitals, dance performances, drama, exhibits, and, on rare occasions, operas. These attractions are mainly staged in City Hall, Academic Community Hall, and the Hong Kong Arts Center. A professional Western symphony orchestra, the Hong Kong Philharmonic, performs from September to June. Other companies funded by the Urban Council such as the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, Hong Kong Repertory Theater (Chinese), Hong Kong Dance Company, and Hong Kong Chorus give regular performances.

Hong Kong has several small museums. The Hong Kong Museum of Art, located at City Hall, has a small collection of Chinese bronzes and ceramics as well as a gallery for various arts exhibits. The Hong Kong Museum of History, located at Kowloon Park, Tsim Sha Tsui, rotates its exhibits periodically. Flagstaff House Museum of Tea Ware boasts a renovated colonial house and displays the historical development of Chinese tea ware. Both the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong have museums exhibiting Chinese cultural antiques. The Pao Siu Loong Galleries at the Hong Kong Arts Center have art exhibits throughout the year. Numerous small galleries throughout Hong Kong sell the works of both Chinese and European artists.

The Hong Kong Arts Festival in January/February presents a wide array of famous overseas performing arts groups. The Festival of Asian Arts in October/November attracts Asian artists from the region in both oriental and Western performing arts. The Hong Kong International Film Festival in April brings together more than 100 films from all over the world.

Education is a principal concern of the Hong Kong Government. It is compulsory up to age 14. Schools are free and instruction is mainly in Chinese in primary school, and in English in secondary school.

The University of Hong Kong is basically a British-style university with facilities for postgraduate work. English is the language of instruction. The Chinese University of Hong Kong, also with postgraduate studies, draws on American models. The languages of instruction are English and Chinese. Both universities offer extension and extramural studies. Hong Kong Baptist College is the largest liberal arts postsecondary school. The Hong Kong Polytechnic offers technical certificate courses to postsecondary students. Both will soon be granting degrees in selected programs.

Commerce and Industry

Hong Kong is a thriving metropolis with financial, commercial, and trade facilities serving all of Asia. Hong Kong is both an industrial community and a flourishing entrepot. The economy has grown without extensive government planning so common in other nations today. With a few exceptions, the Hong Kong Government has remained firmly dedicated to a laissez-faire policy. Economic growth, therefore, has been due largely to private efforts with the government limiting itself to such areas as housing, roads and other transportation facilities, health, and the maintenance of a lawful and orderly society.

Hong Kong's trade balance is normally in deficit but is covered by earnings from tourism and other invisibles as well as capital inflows. The territory imports primarily food, textile yarns and raw cotton, iron and steel, paper, and machinery; it exports clothing, plastics, textiles, electronic goods, and other light industrial products. Salaries and corporation taxes are 15%–17% and 16.5%–18.5%, respectively.

Hong Kong is a free port with a limited number of excise taxes (e.g. tobacco, petroleum products, and liquor) and virtually no red tape. The territory has 144 licensed banks, 347 deposit-taking companies, 154 brokerage firms, and offices of more than 278 insurance companies. The lack of restrictions on currency exchange makes Hong Kong one of Asia's largest financial centers.

The value of domestic exports constituted 50% of Hong Kong's gross domestic production in 1983. The U.S. is its largest customer. In 1983, the U.S. bought 42% of its exports. The U.S. supplies 10.9% of total imports. Principal imports from the U.S. are electrical machinery and appliances, food and agricultural raw materials, electronic components, and diamonds.

Over 442 U.S. companies are registered in Hong Kong; the American business community is well represented by the American Chamber of Commerce.

Transportation

Automobiles

Even though public transportation is available, a car is often more convenient, especially for travel to outlying areas. Small cars are preferable because of the narrow winding roads and limited parking.

Consular corps personnel are exempt from payment of nearly 100% duty on new imported cars. However, when reselling a car which was originally imported on a duty-free basis, the duty will be charged on the depreciated value of the car, unless it is sold to another member of the consular corps. Consular personnel are also exempt from road tax amounting to several hundred U.S. dollars per annum. Consulate personnel may import cars with left-hand steering wheels, but may resell them only to other members of the consular corps or re-export them at the end of their tour. Used cars are often considerably cheaper than in the U.S.

Maintenance and spare parts are available at reasonable prices. However, parts for American-made cars may be more difficult to obtain than for prevalent foreign makes. Consular corps personnel may obtain chitbooks for purchasing duty-free gasoline at prices comparable to the U.S.

Documentation of third-party insurance is required for registration of a vehicle. Several American insurance companies offer inexpensive policies. Substantial discounts can be obtained by presenting a letter from one's previous insurance company attesting to an accident-free driving record during the past 3 years. The Consulate General will assist in registering your car and in obtaining a valid Hong Kong drivers license. Driving tests are not required for those presenting a valid license from the U.S. or other countries whose licenses are recognized by the Hong Kong Government.

Local

The MTR (Mass Transit Railway) subway system connects Hong Kong Central with Kowloon and nearby portions of the New Territories. Since opening in February 1980, it has become a highly efficient, reasonably priced mode of transportation. The Island Line, which connects much of the harbor side of Hong Kong island to the existing system, opened in 1985.

Streetcars operate only in urban areas of Hong Kong Island. Bus service, including minibuses, covers almost the entire island, Kowloon, and the New Ter-

ritories. Buses and streetcars are quite crowded during peak hours. Taxi service is relatively inexpensive and generally available except during rush hours and rainstorms. Most taxi drivers understand some English; radio-cab service exists.

The Peak Tram, a cable car operating from Garden Road opposite the Consulate General to the top of the Peak, is convenient for residents living near its various stops. However, the tram is crowded during rush hours, weekends, and holidays.

A good network of roads exists throughout the territory; however, most are narrow and many are steep and winding because of the terrain. Traffic, which moves on the left, is heavy but well regulated.

The Cross-Harbor Tunnel connects Causeway Bay (Hong Kong) and Kowloon, and greatly reduces travel time across the harbor. For those with a more romantic bent, the Star Ferry operates passenger service between Central (on the Hong Kong side) and Tsim Sha Tsui, the tip of Kowloon. Ferries also go from Victoria to many of the outlying islands.

Regional

Daily air service in and out of Hong Kong is excellent. Some 28 airlines operate through Hong Kong with 500 scheduled arrivals a week. The seaport, one of Asia's largest, handles more than 7,300 incoming ships a year, principally cargo ships.

Trains run between Kowloon and Guangzhou (Canton), China. Hydrofoil and air transportation between Hong Kong and Guangzhou is also available, with connections there to other cities in China. Direct air service between Hong Kong and Shanghai is also available.

Communications

Telephone and Telegraph

Good telephone service is available. If a phone is already installed in your quarters, you are charged a change-of-name fee of H.K.$100 (about U.S.$13) to have the telephone registered in your name. If a phone is not already installed, the Consulate General will pay for initial installation of one phone only. You must pay for extension phones. Basic monthly rate is about H.K.$43 (about U.S.$5.50) and is payable quarterly.

Telegraph/cable service is good; charges are comparable to those in the U.S. for sending international cables. The cable and wireless office is open 24 hours daily.

Mail and Pouch

Postal rates for international airmail are H.K.$1.30 first 10 grams, and $.70 each additional 10 grams. Airletter forms cost H.K.$1. Service is reliable, and transit time from the west coast is 3–5 days airmail and 1–2 months for sea parcel post. Address international mail as follows:

Full Name
American Consulate General
26 Garden Road
Hong Kong
or
Full Name
American Consulate General
G.P.O. Box 66
Hong Kong

Personal mail may be sent by U.S. Navy Post Office facilities in Hong Kong. Use the following return addresses:

Civilians:
Full Name
American Consulate General
Box 30
FPO San Francisco 96659

Defense Liaison Personnel:
Full Name (including rank and social security number)
Defense Liaison Office
Box 10
FPO San Francisco 96659–0002

SAM packages sent through FPO are restricted in size to a maximum of 100 inches length and girth combined and 70 pounds, while airmail packages are 108 inches length and girth combined and 70 pounds. Since the FPO and international mail facilities in Hong Kong are considered good, no pouch facilities are authorized for personal mail other than medicine, eyeglasses, and orthopedic supplies.

Radio and TV

Two mediumwave (AM) radio stations operate in Hong Kong, broadcasting on four separate frequencies to provide separate Chinese and English programs. Also, one Chinese and one English-language FM stereo station broadcast a wide variety of daily programs. A BBC world service relay also operates on FM during the evening and early morning hours. Transistor radio receivers are available here at good prices, and shortwave receivers are particularly good buys.

Two color TV stations operate in Hong Kong and transmit on four separate channels (two Chinese and two English language). The majority of English-language programs are U.S. or U.K. produced and present a variety of entertainment. English-language stations usually begin broadcasting at 4 pm on weekdays, 2 pm on Saturdays, and noon on Sundays and holidays. American TV sets cannot receive local telecasts without expensive conversion. Excellent-quality color TVs are available and they may be rented on a monthly basis.

The broadcast standard is U.K. 625 PAL. Many staff members have video equipment and the Consulate has an informal, free tape exchange program. The most popular cassette format is VHS, although some BETA cassettes exist.

Newspapers, Magazines, and Technical Journals

American and British periodicals are available in Hong Kong. American magazines and technical journals are expensive but are available. Both *Time* and *Newsweek* have Far Eastern editions on the stands weekly.

Two morning English-language daily newspapers, and 124 Chinese newspapers are published in the territory. In addition, the *Asian Wall Street Journal*, the *International Herald Tribune* and the Far Eastern edition of *Stars and Stripes* are available. Many well-stocked bookstores as well as street stalls and small shops carry a good selection of paperbacks and magazines. If you wish to have magazines mailed to post, use the FPO facilities.

Health and Medicine

Medical Facilities

The Consulate General has a health room staffed by a registered nurse. The nurse handles immunizations and treats minor complaints. Health records are maintained in the Health Unit.

The Consulate General has contracts with several doctors for predeparture medical examinations and other medical consultations ordered by the post. The nurse maintains an extensive list with curricula vitae of local physicians and will help arrange appointments and select appropriate specialists.

Many well-qualified British, American, Canadian, and Chinese physicians practice in the territory. Many received their graduate training in medical schools in the U.S., Canada, or Europe.

Hong Kong has several good hospitals. The following are most frequently used by Consulate General personnel: Hong Kong Adventist Hospital, Canossa Hospital, Matilda and War Memorial Hospital. The Consulate General nurse makes regular hospital visits.

You need not bring extra prescription eyeglasses to post, since good ophthal-

Above: From the Peak, a spectacular view of Hong Kong and the Harbor, with Kowloon and the New Territories in the distance. Below: One of the world's greatest travel bargains at HK$.70, the Star Ferry remains the most enjoyable way to cross from Central to Kowloon.

READEX FICHE best copy available

mologists, oculists, and opticians are available. Prescription lenses and attractive frames are readily available.

Several well-qualified dentists and orthodontists, including American, British, European, and Chinese, practice in Hong Kong.

Community Health

Although Hong Kong's climate and geographical location make it vulnerable to infectious diseases, it has been free from any major epidemic in recent years.

The community sanitation level is far above usual Far East standards. All modern homes and apartments are equipped with plumbing and sewage disposal. Main business and residential streets are cleaned daily. The urban services department has strict control over slaughtering and safe handling of meat and fish. It conducts routine examinations to maintain a high standard of sanitation in restaurants and among street vendors. An effective municipal pest control program provides an outdoor extermination service against mosquitoes, rats, snakes, and other pests. Commercial services are available for indoor extermination of cockroaches and other pests. The Malaria Bureau has effectively eliminated malaria in Hong Kong.

Tuberculosis remains one of Hong Kong's principal community health problems. However, an active and efficiently organized anti-TB program has succeeded in reducing the mortality rate from tuberculosis.

Preventive Measures

The Hong Kong Government does not require any immunizations or inoculations for persons traveling from areas where infectious diseases such as cholera, typhoid, etc., are not endemic. However, persons en route to Hong Kong who wish to visit other Asian countries may need immunizations. This information can be obtained from the State Department, from airlines, or from the U.S. Public Health Service.

Athlete's foot and various fungi are prevalent because of the humidity. Eye infections may occur, and ear trouble may develop during the swimming season. In the hot, humid summer, many are subject to skin rashes and prickly heat. Sores and wounds of any kind may take longer to heal and sometimes become infected. Particular care must be taken to keep wounds clean and dry; they should be washed with soap and water promptly and kept covered with a bandage.

Childhood diseases such as measles, whooping cough, and chickenpox are prevalent in about the same degree as in the U.S. All children over 9 months who have not had measles should get live, attenuated measles virus vaccine before coming to post.

Milk bought from licensed dairies is safe, as are butter, cheese, cream, and ice cream.

Although the territory has more than doubled its reservoir capacity in the past few years, water shortages still occur when rainfall is below normal. The water supply from government mains, which passes through a purification plant and is highly chlorinated, is safe to drink. All areas where Consulate General personnel reside and work have safe water supplies.

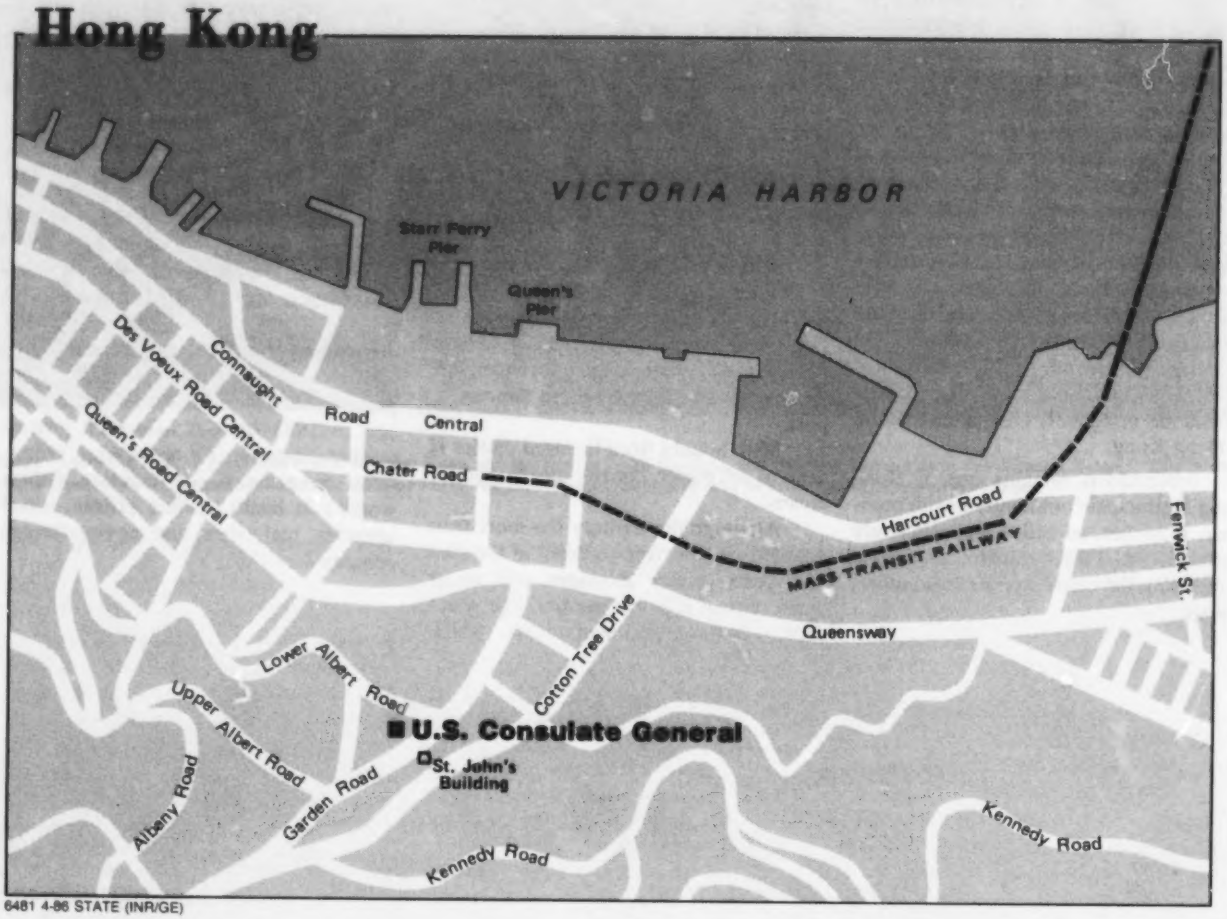
Employment for Spouses and Dependents

The Consulate General or attached agencies may occasionally need the services of a temporary employee. Applicants must be dependents of U.S. citizen employees in Federal service, including military personnel, who have top secret clearances based on full background investigations.

No local laws or regulations limit opportunities for spouses and other dependents to work in Hong Kong. About one-third of all spouses of Consulate General personnel are employed full or part time.

The Consulate General receives occasional requests from American firms in Hong Kong for help in locating suitable employees. Hong Kong also has an employment agency which specializes in finding positions for "expatriates." Many of these positions call for clerical skills; salaries are below the U.S. level for comparable jobs.

In 1985 spouses held such jobs as teacher, librarian, TV newscaster, editor, tutor, receptionist, and secretary. Others worked in banks, airline offices, travel agencies, real estate, and moving/storage companies.



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Consulate General

Hong Kong

The City of Victoria is on Hong Kong Island, a small island adjacent to the mainland of China. Its terrain is steep and rugged. The developed areas consist of high-density, high-rise office buildings and apartments. Because of the dearth of land, Hong Kong has few parks and green areas. However, the steep hills which surround the city are green year round and provide a pleasant visual background.

The Post and Its Administration

The American Consulate General is the official U.S. Government Mission in Hong Kong. The Consul General and a few officers are also accredited to the Portuguese territory of Macau.

The Consulate General is at 26 Garden Road in an office building built by the Department of State. The phone number is 5–239011 from Kowloon, where the airport and piers are located, and 239011 from Hong Kong Island. A Marine Security Guard is on duty 24 hours daily.

In addition to the offices of the Consulate General and USIS, U.S. Government agencies with offices in Hong Kong are the Defense Liaison Office, the Foreign Agricultural Service, Foreign Commercial Service, the Legal Liaison Office, FBIS, the offices of the Immigration and Naturalization Service, the Drug Enforcement Agency, U.S. Customs Service, T.D.P., and the Voice of America. The USIS Library is on the first floor of United Centre, 95 Queensway, Central. The Navy Contracting Office and the FPO are located in the Fleet House. Personnel of all agencies are integrated members of the Consulate General.

The Consulate General is given check-writing service by the U.S. Treasury regional disbursing officer in Bangkok. Payroll service is provided by RAMC Bangkok. Salaries are paid by U.S. Treasury checks in U.S. dollars or through allotments. Temporary lodging and quarters allowances are paid in U.S. dollars, and education allowances are paid in either currency.

You will be met at the airport, train station, or pier by a Consulate General staff member if you send prior notice of arrival date and time and mode of transportation. If not met, call the personnel office during office hours or the duty officer on weekends and holidays. Duty hours are 8:30 am to 5:30 pm, Monday-Friday. The Consulate General meets and assists U.S. Government official visitors of the rank of Deputy Assistant Secretary, Ambassador, Assistant Secretary, and above.

Immediately upon arrival, all employees and adult dependents will need seven 1" x 1 ¼" photographs to be used on the Hong Kong drivers license and the Hong Kong consular corps ID card. No other size will be accepted. Children under 11 need no photographs.

Housing

Temporary Quarters

New arrivals generally move immediately into their permanent quarters. If this is not possible, they are housed in temporary quarters from a few days to a couple of months until permanent quarters become available. The two hotels most generally used when necessary are the Hilton and the Furama, both within easy walking distance of the office.

Permanent Housing

All American officers and staff employees are assigned U.S. Government-owned or leased quarters, most of which are located in the central (midlevels) area or on the opposite side of the island around Repulse Bay. Most apartments are in high-rise buildings and consist of a living/dining room area, two to four bedrooms (depending on size of family), two baths, balcony, kitchen, and servants quarters.

The majority of official American employees of the Consulate General are assigned quarters by the Post Inter-agency Housing Board, composed of officers and employees selected to represent the official community. For personnel of attached agencies which do not participate in the Post Housing Pool, decisions on quarters are usually made by the agency head. However, initial selection of quarters by the agency will be in general accordance with post standards.

Assignments to quarters are made on the basis of family size, rank, and representational responsibility in accordance with Airgram 1093 of 1979. Timing of arrivals and departures is also an important factor. Representation quarters for chiefs of section and heads of agencies are assigned or approved by the deputy principal officer.

The residence of the consul general has recently been relocated from a U.S. Government-owned property to a temporary residence near the Hong Kong Country Club, which has a spacious back yard which overlooks Deep Water Bay. The two-story private residence has recently been renovated and has large living and dining rooms, study/guest room, full bath and a very large kitchen on the first floor, and three bedrooms and two baths on the second floor. There are also two levels at the rear containing seven small rooms for servants and/or storage, a small kitchen, laundry room, two showers and two lavatories.

The previous residence site will be redeveloped through a complex agreement with a local land development company. Present plans call for the construction of a new consul general residence and five senior officer bungalows, including the deputy principal officer's home, with construction to be completed approximately 18 months after it begins. The site is 1,025 feet above sea level and has a magnificent view of Victoria Harbor and Kowloon on one side, and a view of several islands to the south on the other side.

One other construction project, also included in the agreement with the local land development company, will eventually provide 79 staff apartments with swimming pool and tennis courts. This project is scheduled for completion in 1986.

A Foreign Buildings Office (FBO) construction project at Shouson Hill was completed in early 1986. This project consists of 26 U.S. Government-owned two-, three-, and four-bedroom apartments in six buildings located on the other side of the island, approximately 20 minutes'

drive from the office. The complex has a 27' x 43' swimming pool with two sundecks, an underground parking area and sufficient external parking for guests. The site has views of the ocean entrance to Deep Water Bay, and of a mountain side in Ocean Park which displays a huge sea horse fashioned from various types and colors of plants, shrubs, and trees.

The U.S. Government also owns one representational and two staff apartments in different areas on the island.

Furnishings

The inventory provided in housing units in Hong Kong is intended to accommodate many purposes, and therefore necessitates a certain degree of uniformity. All items are standardized to the extent possible to meet basic requirements and for long-term occupancy rather than the short-term needs of individual occupants. Every attempt has been made to furnish all U.S. Government-owned and -leased quarters with attractive and sturdy furnishings along with appliances and equipment. Following is a basic list of items which are normally provided:

Living Room: sofa, two upholstered chairs, coffee table, two end tables, one nest of tables (3), two table lamps, desk and/or bookcases as space allows, carpet, and draperies.

Dining Room: dining table with 6–10 chairs (depending on size of table and room), buffet, china cabinet, one floor lamp, carpet, and draperies.

Bedroom: bed(s) (see comments below), night stand(s), dresser, dressing table with chair, table lamp(s), carpet, and draperies.

Kitchen: stove, refrigerator, and dishwasher.

Other equipment and appliances: basic lighting fixtures, air-conditioners with reverse cycle heating, dehumidifiers, electric clothes washer and dryer, vacuum cleaner, and a floor polisher/rug shampooer.

The majority of hard furniture supplied is Danish modern design teakwood. Upholstered pieces are modern/traditional design. Floor lamps and some table lamps are the brass candlestick variety. Also available are ginger-jar style porcelain table lamps. Most beds supplied by the Consulate General are twin beds, which can be zippered together and used as king size. Do not bring fitted sheets, as all beds are not U.S. standard, and good quality sheets can be made to order here.

Bring to post or buy here such items as table linens, china, glassware, cooking utensils, silverware, bedding, ironing boards, and small electrical appliances such as toaster, mixer, and blender which can be used on local voltage or with a transformer.

The hot, humid climate is hard on all furniture, especially on overstuffed items, as well as on books, carpets, and pictures. The very bright sunlight has a tendency to fade furniture and ruin draperies much quicker than in the U.S. With proper use of air-conditioning and dehumidifiers, damage from mildew and rust can be kept to a minimum.

Due to limited storage space and to ensure that a complete set is available in each apartment for future occupants, items of the basic set of furniture or furnishings cannot be removed from government-furnished quarters. Basic items will also not be removed to accommodate like items purchased locally or from another country during employee's assignment. Except for small miscellaneous decorator items or a piece of furniture or equipment required for medical or other justifiable reason, furniture and large appliances should not be included in your limited shipment of household effects unless specifically authorized in writing from the post administrative officer.

Utilities and Equipment

Heating is usually by reverse-cycle air-conditioners supplemented by electric heaters. Electrical current is 220v, 50-cycle, AC; power is dependable with little voltage fluctuation. Transformers are required for 110v appliances. One large and one small transformer are normally provided by the post. If additional transformers are necessary they should be included with household effects purchased locally.

Synchronous 60-cycle appliances such as electric clocks, record players, and tape recorders will not function properly on 50 cycles. Most record players and tape recorders can be converted but electric clocks cannot. American and European plugs will not fit into the three-prong round sockets used in Hong Kong but adapter plugs are available. Hong Kong has a wide variety of 220v appliances available at reasonable prices. Color televisions, video players, stereo components, and electric clocks with built-in converters for either 50 or 60 cycles and voltage adjusters from 120v to 220v are also readily available.

Food

Local markets and supermarkets provide a wide variety of processed foods and fresh produce. Food shopping in Hong Kong is best and most economically accomplished in the European fashion rather than the American; i.e., going to different shops and markets for different foods. Supermarkets supply canned and frozen foods of every variety, and frozen meats imported from the U.S., Great Britain, Australia, and New Zealand. Brand name baby foods are also available, as are some specialty and seasonal items such as canned pumpkin, cranberry sauce, and Christmas puddings.

The local markets sell a profusion of fresh fruits, vegetables, local and imported meats, and poultry. Also, fresh fish and seafood are sold at lower prices than in supermarkets which cater to Europeans. Almost any food item is available at supermarkets and local supermarkets, but prices of many items are high.

Numerous specialty food shops carry such items as German and French sausages and pâtés and a large variety of cheeses. Coffees and teas from all over the world are sold here. Many fine wine and liquor stores can be found in Hong Kong. Many cake and pastry shops and bakeries produce a large variety of pastries, breads, and rolls.

Local dairies provide pasteurized milk and dairy products. Butter and cheeses are imported. Many employees use powdered milk, which is readily available.

The Consulate General has a small cooperative commissary in the basement of the building. It carries a limited supply of duty-free wines, liquors, and cigarettes, and limited supplies of paper products and foodstuffs. The co-op does not stock fresh produce. Food prices in the commissary are slightly higher than those in the Washington area. A deposit, refunded on departure from post, of $150 per family or $75 for a single person, is required for membership in the co-op.

A snackbar in the basement of the Consulate General serves light breakfast and lunch.

Clothing

A varied wardrobe such as needed in Washington is appropriate for Hong Kong. Winter is short—January to early March—but it can be cold and damp, so woolen coats, suits, and dresses are needed. Through the remainder of the

Clockwise from top: U.S. Consulate General; elementary school building at Hong Kong International School (HKIS); swimming pool at HKIS; and the St. John's Building, located directly across from the Consulate, houses DEA, Customs, FBIS, FCS, INS, and TDP.

year, lightweight summer clothing is worn.

Since social life in Hong Kong is quite active for all grade levels, a good supply of informal evening clothes is recommended.

Men. Men need lightweight suits from April through November and several heavier suits for cold months. Dinner jackets/tuxedos are required occasionally and can be tailormade locally.

American and British summer and winter suit materials are stocked locally, and good tailoring is substantially cheaper than in the U.S. Shirts, sportswear, hats, underwear, and other haberdashery are available at prices lower than or comparable to those in the U.S.; however, only a few stores sell European sizes. Hats are seldom worn. Good tennis shoes, British or local, are available.

Women. Bring a large supply of summer cottons and other lightweight washable dresses to post. This type of clothing is worn from April through November. Constant washing and strong sunlight cause deterioration and fading of clothing, so the lifespan of summer dresses can be short.

Materials such as cotton and varieties of silks and woolens are stocked for tailormade dresses, suits, and coats. Some fabrics are inexpensive, but tailoring of women's clothing is not. The finished product often leaves much to be desired, and it is hard to find anyone to do alterations. American patterns are available as well as most sewing notions.

An increasing number of shops carry imported American and European ready-to-wear dresses. Prices for readymade clothing average one-third more than in the U.S. A wide variety of cashmere and fine British and Italian sweaters and knits are available at prices lower than in the U.S. Locally manufactured knitted dresses, suits, and coats are also available. However, variety is limited in size 12 and above. Many women order clothing and shoes from mail-order houses in the U.S.

Most social occasions are informal. Women find they need more casual evening attire than in the U.S. or at most other posts. Bring a good supply of informal evening wear since this type of clothing is more expensive here than in the U.S.

Lingerie, including U.S. brands, is readily available here. Lingerie in general is more expensive than in the U.S. British-made undergarments in a variety of materials are available in some shops. Some U.S. and British brands of hosiery are also available. However, tall or Queen-sized hosiery is difficult to find and expensive when available.

Lined raincoats are often worn during the cooler months and may be used without lining for the warmer, rainy season. If you have a fur jacket or stole, bring it to post for winter evenings.

Some readymade American and European shoes are available but expensive and come in wider widths. Narrow shoes and sizes 7½ and above are hard to find. Some women have shoes made by Hong Kong shoemakers whom many consider to be good. However, if you have any difficulty with correct fit, bring a good supply of shoes, especially comfortable walking shoes.

Sports clothes, including bathing suits, are sold here. Well-known brands are available, mostly in small sizes, at prices slightly higher than in the U.S. Locally made inexpensive knits are also available.

Women do not generally wear shorts on the streets in Hong Kong, but slacks and pantsuits are often worn. White is still the only color acceptable on tennis courts.

It cannot be stressed too strongly that the majority of American women will not be able to purchase readymade clothing, underwear, hose, or shoes in Hong Kong, except those in the most expensive boutiques, as the sizes carried are extremely small (women's dress size 12, for example, is considered large in many stores).

Children. Children dress just as in the U.S. except that heavy winter wear is not needed. Hong Kong has many children's shops with attractive clothes. However, it is difficult to find desired sizes and prices are high. Most parents order children's clothing from U.S. mail-order houses. Those who sew make their children's clothing. Blue jeans are standard streetwear. British and American woolen and cotton underwear, socks, jerseys, shirts, bathing suits, and sweaters are available. Many parents also shop for children's clothing in the alley stalls where quality is usually acceptable and prices are reasonable.

Bring all your clothing to post. Personnel have regretted leaving winter clothing in storage because it does get very cool.

Children's shoes cost more than in the U.S., and choice is limited. It is hard to find shoes of correct size, proper fit, and desired styles. Orthopedic shoes are not available.

Supplies and Services

Supplies

American, British, French, and German toiletries, cosmetics, and feminine hygiene products are available in Hong Kong, but prices are high. French perfumes can be purchased at a reasonable price.

The territory has good pharmacies. Bring any needed prescriptions with you.

Good quality children's toys are available but expensive.

Most household products are available in several brands. However, if you have sufficient weight allowance, include bath mats and kitchen gadgets since they are more expensive here than in the U.S. Note paper, stationery, gift wrappings, greeting cards, and party favors are available.

Basic Services

Hong Kong has reliable drycleaners, some of which use American methods and materials. Good laundries are available.

Beauty shops have reasonably high standards of sanitation. Work is satisfactory and prices reasonable.

Ordinary shoe repairers operate on the street, in stairways, or in alleys. Repair service is fair and reasonably priced.

Car maintenance and repair are moderately priced for small foreign cars. Parts and service for American cars are more difficult to obtain. Because of the hilly terrain, brakes and clutch plates should be checked at least twice a year.

Domestic Help

It is becoming difficult, though not impossible, to find domestic help, and salaries are increasing at a rapid rate. Full-time Chinese cooks are almost a thing of the past; any live-in Chinese servant is a rarity and extremely costly. Some Americans hire Filipino servants on a live-in basis. Part-time domestic help, principally for general housework and laundry, is available.

Chinese servants, whether full- or part-time, receive a Chinese New Year's bonus, equivalent to 1 month's salary, on a pro rata basis. Full-time Chinese servants salaries range from H.K.$2,200 to H.K.$3,300 per month. Part-time Chinese servants receive hourly wages of between H.K.$20 and H.K.$30 plus bus transportation.

By law, minimum wage for Filipino servants is H.K.$1,800–H.K.$1,950 per month. Contracts are processed through the Hong Kong Government and Philippine Consulate and all documents are paid

for by the employer. Additionally, the employer must either provide all food or a food allowance of H.K.$300 per month, housing, clothing, medical insurance, and one round trip to the Philippines every 2 years for their home leave. By law, servants have 11 local holidays, 1 week of annual leave after 1 full year of successful performance, and a home leave (2–6 weeks) every 2 years, in the case of overseas domestic helpers.

All servants should have a medical examination including chest X-ray, blood serological, and stool examination.

Religious Activities

Religious services are held in English by the following denominations: Baptist (American Minister), Christian Science, Church of England (Episcopal), English Methodist, Lutheran (American Minister), Presbyterian (Union), Quaker, Seventh-day Adventist, Roman Catholic, and Jewish (Ohel Leah Synagogue).

Education

Dependent Education

At Post. The Hong Kong International School (HKIS) is sponsored by and operated under the auspices of the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (USA). It is registered with the Office of Education of the Hong Kong Government and is associated with other American overseas schools in the Far East. HKIS is a very good college preparatory school. Its accredited status by the Western Association of the U.S. reflects its conformity with American educational standards. Half the staff is composed of trained teachers recruited in the U.S. through the Lutheran school system, and appointed for a minimum of 3 years. The remainder of the staff, also professionally trained and experienced, consists of members of the American and European community in Hong Kong plus a few Chinese instructors.

HKIS serves a community which is definitely religiously diverse. Although religious instruction is mandatory, course offerings may be selected that encompass Christian or Bible subjects as well as a variety of non-Christian topics such as existentialism and oriental religions. Chapel is voluntary for student attendance in grades 7–12, and for kindergarten through grade 6 there are weekly chapel services and 20-minute religious instruction classes. Parents who object to these conditions should be aware that there is an away-from-post school allowance.

HKIS opened in September 1967 in a new eight-story building in the Repulse Bay area. An annex designed especially for the elementary grades (open-space facilities) opened in 1975.

HKIS is the only American school in Hong Kong. Of its estimated 1,300 students, 860 are U.S. citizens, including about 75 dependents of U.S. Government employees. It offers an American curriculum in kindergarten through grade 12. Instruction is in English with emphasis on academic or college preparatory courses. Some advanced placement courses are given. More than 90% of the graduates enroll in American colleges and universities. The average 1983 SAT scores were 580 for verbal and 550 for math. Remedial instruction is not available.

The elementary school (K–6) is an air-conditioned "open space" facility consisting of six clusters of over 4,000 square feet each; a gymnasium, library, and swimming pool. Education approaches range from self-contained classrooms to independent learning and team-teaching situations.

The secondary unit (grades 7–12) is completely air-conditioned and contains 30 classrooms, separate physics, chemistry, biology, and music laboratories, a cafeteria, gymnasium, swimming pool, audio visual center, bookstore, library, and guidance office.

A full program of American-type extracurricular activities is offered including clubs, publications, band, string ensembles, chorus, student council, dramatics, and athletics (swimming, basketball, track, softball, tennis, volleyball, cross country, girls' field hockey, badminton, and judo). Interscholastic competition includes meets with Bangkok and Taipei American schools. Some emphasis is placed on intercultural programs. Cantonese is taught in grades 3–7; Mandarin, French, and Spanish are offered in grades 7–12.

The school year normally runs from the last week in August until mid-June. Students either walk to and from school or travel by private car, public transportation, or private-company buses contracted by the school.

Since the school is at capacity enrollment, you should request application forms as far in advance as possible. Write to the Admissions Office, Hong Kong International School, 6 South Bay Close, Repulse Bay, Hong Kong. You may, if you wish, write to Community Liaison Office of the Consulate General for assistance.

Public government-operated schools, British military dependent schools, and private schools in both Hong Kong and Kowloon use British curricula. Admittance and decision as to grade level placement are based on age, the results of an entrance examination in English and mathematics, and availability of space. A medical examination is also required.

The city is zoned and children attend the government schools according to where they live. Private schools are for the most part church affiliated. Chinese children have first preference in enrollment.

All schools other than HKIS follow the British curriculum. Some American children, especially at high school level, find it hard to adjust to the teaching system as well as to the curriculum. Secondary students are expected to know algebra, geometry, Latin, and French. Students attending these schools often need outside tutoring. History and geography classes relate primarily to the British Empire. Social studies are not emphasized. At the completion of Form V (grade 11), students must pass the GCE examination, ordinary level, for admittance to Lower Form VI (grade 12).

Away From Post. The nearest schools away from post are: Brent School, Baguio, Philippines; Morrison Academy, Taichung, Taiwan; The Canadian Academy, Kobe, Japan; and The International School of the Sacred Heart (girls only), Tokyo, Japan. All these schools have boarding facilities. Write directly to the schools or to the personnel officer at the nearest post for further information.

The Hong Kong away-from-post allowance is U.S.$10,700 in 1985–86.

Special Educational Opportunities

Adult education courses are available at both Hong Kong University and the Chinese University of Hong Kong. The courses cover literature, history, journalism, philosophy, architecture, pottery making, and many other subjects. The "Y," HKIS, Island School, Towngas, Electric Co., and the American Women's Association also offer adult education classes.

Entrance as a full-time student either to the University of Hong Kong or to the Chinese University is almost impossible. The entrance examinations, based on a British educational background, are difficult for an American student to pass. Neither university wants students who are not permanent residents of Hong Kong, except as noncredit auditors.

Excellent opportunities to study many phases of Chinese culture, especially Cantonese, are available. Instruction in modern dance, ballet, voice, instrumental music, Western and Asian painting, and sports are available. Language classes are taught at the Alliance Francaise, Goethe Institute, and the Italian Cultural Society.

Post Orientation Program

The Consulate General has a sponsor program designed to aid new arrivals in getting established at post. Besides meeting the newcomer at time of arrival, a sponsor will be available to give advice and help with such things as housing, shopping, social life, etc. Upon your arrival, you will be given a briefing on the post and aspects of living in Hong Kong. You will meet the consul general and the deputy principal officer and tour the Consulate General.

The Consulate General has a limited language-training program. Language-designated officers are given training in either Mandarin or Cantonese as their positions indicate. Group classes in Cantonese are held for employees and adult dependents. You can also take language instruction at personal expense at the University of Hong Kong and the New Asia College of Chinese University.

Recreation and Social Life

Recreation presents a problem in Hong Kong. Facilities for entertainment are quite extensive, but opportunities for active pastimes (sports) are limited and expensive.

Sports

Most sports such as golf, tennis, squash, riding, and swimming have facilities available through private clubs only. Waiting lists for membership in most of these clubs exceed the average tour in Hong Kong. Public tennis courts exist, but using them is almost impossible due to heavy demand.

Sailing and yachting are popular and possible year round. Often groups of employees rent a boat for a day's outing. Some persons buy a boat together, but purchase price and maintenance can be expensive. A possible exception is a small sailing craft which can be purchased and maintained at reasonable prices.

While there are some convenient beaches around Hong Kong, all are crowded, small, and somewhat polluted. The beaches on the outer islands are cleaner and less populated; however, travel to the outer islands requires either a private boat or long ferry rides.

Many people go hiking and walking for recreation and exercise and the opportunity for this type of activity is endless. The territory has many well-marked trails for strenuous mountain hiking and paved paths for easier, meandering walks.

Ten-pin bowling is popular among Consulate General personnel. Many are members of the Inter-Consulate Bowling League. This league is open to employees of all Consulates and commissions in Hong Kong. Bowling equipment is available and bowling facilities are adequate.

Some Americans participate in the activities of the Hong Kong Softball Association which includes men's and women's softball teams. Because of the summer heat the softball teams are active only from September through April.

Popular spectator sports include soccer, cricket, softball, basketball, and horse racing (October–May).

Touring and Outdoor Activities

Macau is the only nearby place of interest to spend the day. This 400-year-old Portuguese province, 40 miles west of Hong Kong, is a place of old and gentle charm in contrast with Hong Kong's constant bustle. It is the oldest European colony in Asia. Travel by hydrofoil takes just over 1 hour, or 45 minutes by jetfoil. On the surface, Macau maintains the slow pace of a drowsy Mediterranean city. Food, a mixture of Portuguese, English, and Chinese cooking, is tasty and interesting.

Vacation trips by ship and air to Japan, Southeast Asia, and the Philippines are possible but expensive. The cost of hotels and food varies greatly from place to place.

Japan, with its beautiful countryside and temples, is a 3½-hour flight. By ship the trip takes 4 or more days. Because of the expense, most people try to visit Japan en route to or from the post.

The Philippines is becoming increasingly tourist minded. Manila, Corregidor, Tagaytay, and Baguio are pleasant vacation spots. The trip takes 2 hours by plane or about 1 day by ship.

Thailand is interesting and different. The people, temples, royal palace, and glimpses of canal life are delightful. Bangkok is a 3½-hour flight; the ocean trip takes 5 days. Bangkok is a bustling, noisy city, but many charming quiet spots are just outside Bangkok.

Singapore can be reached by air in about 3½ hours. From there you may travel to Kuala Lumpur, the resort island of Penang, Fraser's Hill, Cameron Highlands, and Malacca with its old world atmosphere.

Taiwan also attracts tourists. A number of interesting trips can be taken through the countryside and into the mountains. Taipei is about an hour away by plane.

Travel to China is now possible. Tours are extremely popular and generally have to be booked well in advance. The cost is fairly high: U.S.$100 per person, per day.

Hong Kong has many interesting sights for tourists and photographers. Reputable tourist agencies offer excellent tours. Among the more interesting excursions are the water tours of the island, tours of Kowloon, the New Territories, Hong Kong Island, the fishing village of junks and sampans at Aberdeen, and the ride to the top of Victoria peak by funicular cable car. Ocean Park is Hong Kong's newest recreational attraction. Facilities include the world's largest aquarium, an ocean theater, a zoo, flower and water gardens, and oriental and Western restaurants. A visit to Ocean Park makes a pleasurable and interesting outing for the entire family.

Entertainment

The most popular form of entertainment in Hong Kong is eating. About 1½ million people eat out daily, the highest rate per capita in the world. The range of restaurants runs from some rated among the best in the world to street vendors. All types of Western restaurants are available, and of course the choice of oriental food is practically endless.

Interest in the performing arts has increased substantially in Hong Kong over the past 5 years. Both the Hong Kong Arts Center and City Hall are the center of Hong Kong's cultural life.

Facilities offered by the Municipal Center of City Hall include a 1,000-seat concert hall that can also be used for theatrical productions, an intimate 400-seat theater (also used as a cinema), a 120-seat recital hall, an exhibition gallery, rooms for lectures and conferences, and two public restaurants with bars. It also houses the Hong Kong Museum of Art and the main branch of the Urban Council public libraries system. The Hong Kong Museum of Art has built up collections of Chinese art and antiquities, historical pictures, ethnographical materials, and archaeological finds, as well as local and contemporary art.

The Art Center's facilities include a 463-seat multipurpose theater, a 191-seat recital hall for music recitals and films, a 100-seat studio theater (with movable seating units) used for small-scale and experimental drama workshops and rehearsals, two art galleries, open-air sculpture terrace, music practice rooms, photographic studio and darkroom, record listening library, and three public bars, and restaurants.

The Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra became a professional orchestra in 1974 and is the nucleus of Hong Kong's musical life. The orchestra has an 11-month season from April through February and gives concerts every other Friday and Saturday evening throughout the season. Guest artists of world renown appear with the orchestra and perform solo recitals.

Among amateur theatrical groups active in Hong Kong are the Hong Kong State Club, the Garrison Players, and the American Community Theatre. Each group produces several plays each year. The American Community Theatre is a group with an international membership which stages American theatrical productions, mostly musicals.

The most active and best known choral groups are the Hong Kong Singers and the St. Cecilia Singers. These nonprofessional groups present one or two cantatas, operettas, or musicals during the year.

Free lunchtime concerts and recitals are held each Wednesday in St. John's Cathedral (Episcopal), which is located one-half block from the Consulate General. The program includes both sacred and secular music.

Many air-conditioned movie theaters offer American, British, European, and Chinese films. Westerns and spectaculars are the most popular types and have the longest runs. Studio One, a movie club, offers a variety of international movies, many experimental, and shows films at the City Hall theater. High-quality foreign-language films are often shown by the French and German Societies.

The Chinese calendar contains many holidays, but the most widely celebrated is, of course, Chinese or Lunar New Year (January/February). This is a family-type holiday when for 4 days all shops are closed, visits and calls are paid on family and friends, and gifts are exchanged. Other Chinese holidays include Ching Ming (March/April), the commemoration of the dead; Dragon Boat Festival (May/June), a time for boat races between various groups and associations; and the Harvest or Moon Festival (September/October). Any public celebrations connected with holidays are extremely crowded, but a few members of the Consulate General staff occasionally attend. For the most part, foreigners are welcomed and photographs are allowed.

Social Activities

Senior staff members socialize with British and Chinese officials, local business persons, Consulate General colleagues, and visiting Americans. Except for commercial officers, personnel find that social relations with resident Americans are apt to be less frequent than contacts with British or Chinese.

Junior officers and staff personnel may have as active a social life as their inclinations and financial resources permit. Social activities include dinners, cocktail parties, boat excursions, etc.

The American Women's Association (AWA) has about 1,200 regular and associate members. The Association has a monthly luncheon or tea meeting, usually with a speaker. It supports many community projects and offers a wide variety of activities. Joining AWA is a good way to meet Americans outside the Consulate General and also to get to know women of other nationalities.

The Consulate General Women's Club holds periodic coffees at the consul general's residence with interesting guest speakers.

A group of female personnel from Consulates and Commissions in Hong Kong meet monthly for dinner. Many American Consulate General women attend for the opportunity to broaden their international contacts.

The Rotary Clubs, American Chamber of Commerce, Lions Clubs, Toastmaster and Toastmistress Clubs, the American University Club, League of Women Voters, Hong Kong (an integral part of the League of Women Voters of the U.S.), and many other groups where individuals can meet local residents and expatriates are available.

The Brownies, Cub Scouts, Girl Guides, and Little League baseball are active in Hong Kong. A public children's library is in City Hall, and a private one is in the American Club. The Hong Kong International School sponsors summer sports and skills programs. Various churches also have youth activities.

Handicrafts, the Red Cross, YMCA, and many other welfare agencies—some branches of U.S. organizations offer a variety of opportunities for both men and women for volunteer service.

Official Functions

Nature of Functions

Official functions include only the more senior members of the Hong Kong Government and the leading members of the business, professional, and cultural communities. The weight of representational entertaining falls on senior Consulate General staff members. Semiofficial functions are more numerous and embrace a wider circle of people.

Middle-grade officers have excellent opportunities to develop useful contacts on their own initiative with persons of corresponding grade in the Hong Kong Government, in other Consulates and Commissions, and among business and professional groups.

Hong Kong has official representatives of 54 countries and almost every one of them celebrates its national day with an affair of some type.

Standards of Social Conduct

Printed invitations are used for official and semiofficial functions. Informals are also used for invitations to teas and coffees and for other informal occasions. Acceptances and regrets are written unless a telephone number is given.

Male personnel wear black dinner jackets in winter; white jackets are optional in summer.

Senior and middle-grade officers need about 250 calling cards. Most junior officers and staff personnel need few cards. A good supply of "informals" or other note paper is useful. Printing can be done here quickly and inexpensively.

Above: Bargain hunting along the "ladder streets" in Central District. Below: Repulse Bay, with its spendid setting, is one of Hong Kong's most popular beaches.

Notes For Travelers

Getting to the Post

All personnel traveling the Pacific route by air are encouraged to use the authorized 24-hour delay en route in Honolulu, Tokyo, or Guam. A valid visa is required for a stay in Japan.

The Consulate has a limited number of Welcome Kits which include bedding, pillows, towels, dishes, flatware, and kitchen utensils which may be used until your household effects arrive.

Include towels, baby items, toys, and other small household items in airfreight. Airfreight usually arrives within 2 weeks. Surface shipments from the U.S. normally take 2 months.

No restrictions are made on the size of cartons, crates, or liftvans entering the territory. Wooden cases are preferable to metal containers; both should be waterproof, and wooden cases should be steel banded. All shipments should be marked as follows:

American Consulate General
Hong Kong
For: Name (title, agency)

The amount of pilferage and breakage is small. Packers in Hong Kong are competent and reliable.

No crating of cars for shipment to Hong Kong is authorized by the Department. If you choose to crate your car, you must bear the crating charges as well as additional freight costs unless the car is shipped from a country which requires boxing.

Customs, Duties, and Passage

Customs and Duties

Officers and staff personnel of all U.S. Government agencies are exempt from paying duty. Personal and household effects may be imported only for the use of the employee and dependents living in Hong Kong.

The privilege of importing and registering left-hand-drive cars is extended to all Consulate General staff members. The car must be either removed from the territory when you leave or sold to another consular corps member.

You do not need to import food or liquor into Hong Kong. You may buy tax-free gasoline, liquor, and cigarettes.

Passage

A valid visa is necessary for entry. After arrival, staff members are registered with the immigration authorities by the Consulate General. A reentry visa is then issued, valid for the period of assignment. The Hong Kong Government issues consular corps identity cards to all personnel and adult dependents age 11 or above of the Consulate General.

Pets

Dogs and cats imported from any country other than the U.K., Ireland, Australia, or New Zealand must remain in quarantine for 6 months. This regulation is rigidly enforced and no exceptions are made. Boarding fees for animals for the 6-month quarantine are according to the weight of the animal. Present rates are as follows but are subject to change (check current rate of exchange for U.S. dollar costs):

Animal		Cost per day
Cat		H.K.$15
Dog	(1–39 lbs)	H.K.$30
	(40–70 lbs)	H.K.$38
	(70–over)	H.K.$45

A health certificate signed by a qualified veterinarian of the country of origin must accompany all dogs and cats brought into Hong Kong. Apply for an import permit directly by mail, in advance, to:

Senior Veterinary Officer
Agriculture and Fisheries Department
12/F
393 Canton Road
Government Offices
Kowloon, Hong Kong
Tel No.: 3–688111

AFLSK 24/33 Pamphlet
Import and Export of Pet Animals
RSPCA Telephone: 5–280501
5–516661

Include name of animal, breed, age, sex, and weight. Also indicate date, flight number, and airline on which the animal will be arriving in Hong Kong. Animals can be housed in government kennels or the private Pokfulam Kennel. Reservations for the private kennel should be made well in advance. Write directly to Pokfulam Kennels, I.L. 8292 Victoria Road, Hong Kong. Arrangements can also be made to send animals prior to your arrival.

Firearms and Ammunition

Special licenses issued by the Hong Kong Government prior to the item's arrival in the colony are required for all firearms, swords, spears, underwater harpoon guns, and similar deadly weapons, as well as for any type of ammunition. Any person importing arms or ammunition to Hong Kong without the required firearms license must surrender them to the police, who will store them until the owner departs the territory.

As there is very little use for firearms in the territory, do not include them in your shipment of effects.

Currency, Banking, and Weights and Measures

Currency is the Hong Kong dollar, which is currently pegged to the U.S. dollar and is freely convertible to other currencies. Its value in terms of U.S. dollars fluctuates according to market conditions around its par value of H.K.$7.80 = U.S.$1. Any currency may be brought into the territory.

The large majority of personnel open local checking accounts, generally with one of the American banks. Such accounts are useful, since almost every shop will accept a local check. You should also maintain a U.S. checking account.

The Hong Kong Government has been introducing the metric system over the past few years. A few supermarkets now use grams and kilos, but pounds, inches and gallons are still the norm. Local markets continue to use the kati, which is roughly 1¼ pounds. Temperature is recorded in celsius. The Post Office now uses the metric system.

Taxes, Exchange, and Sale of Property

Restrictions

American personnel are exempt from paying the 30% surcharge on first registration on cars and registration fee. However, you must pay for a car registration book (H.K.$10) and a special fee (H.K.$100) if you have a car with left-hand-drive. License plates are manufactured at your expense. A transfer fee of H.K.$50 must be paid on the sale of cars. A fee of H.K.$10 per annum is charged when you apply for a drivers license.

Since Hong Kong is a duty-free port, the market for secondhand personal property is not lucrative.

The Peak Tram, now in its 97th year, runs on tracks whose gradient sometimes reaches 45 degrees.

Facilities

American banks have foreign exchange facilities and will cash U.S. Treasury or personal checks. You can also buy travelers checks at these banks. American Express and Lark International Finance Ltd., as well as other licensed banks and investment companies, also provide foreign exchange services. The Consulate General does not have accommodation exchange facilities.

Recommended Reading

These titles are provided as a general indication of the material published on this country. The Department of State does not endorse unofficial publications.

American Chamber of Commerce. *Living in Hong Kong*.

Baker, Hugh D.R. *A Chinese Lineage Village: Sheung Shui*.

Clavel, James. *Taipan*.

Contes, Austin. *Myself a Mandarin*.

Collis, Maurice. *Foreign Mud*.

Elegant, Robert. *Dynasty*.

Endicott, G.B. *A History of Hong Kong*.

Endicott, G.B. and A. Hinton. *Fragrant Harbor: A Short History of Hong Kong*.

Hong Kong Government. *Hong Kong 1985—Report for the year 1984* (issued annually).

Hopkins, Keith (ed.). *Hong Kong—The Industrial Colony*.

Hughes, Richard. *Hong Kong—Borrowed Time, Borrowed Place*.

Local Holidays

The following local holidays are observed by the Consulate General. Some vary from year to year according to the lunar calendar.

Lunar New Year (4 days)	January/February
Ching Ming Festival	April
Good Friday	April
Dragon Boat Festival	May/June
The Birthday of Her Majesty the Queen	June
Liberation Day	August
Mid-Autumn Festival	September
Chung Yeung Festival	September/October
Boxing Day	First weekday after Christmas Day